

NO CHANGE IN CLASS.
DECLASSIFIED
CLASS. CHANGED TO: TS S C
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NSC BRIEFING -- CUBA

I. Provisional President Manuel Urrutia established himself in presidential palace in Havana 5 January.

A. Urrutia, Fidel Castro's personal choice for president, is 58 year-old former judge who gained fame ~~under Batista~~ ^{against Batista} by acquitting a number of youths charged with rebel activity. Strongly anti-Communist.

B. Urrutia's cabinet contains moderate, responsible elements, but also some unknowns.

1. Prime Minister Jose Mire Cardona is very highly regarded president of Cuban Bar Ass'n just returned from exile.

2. Foreign Minister Roberto Agramonte is leading political and intellectual figure and former presidential candidate; regarded as pre-US and strongly anti-Communist.

C. Urrutia has named Fidel Castro his "delegate" to armed forces; Fidel will probably be top military chief and most influential figure in govt.

II. ~~Thus far, only a few indications as to new govt's policies.~~

A. Fidel Castro has often asserted his desire for friendship with US.

1. However, strong bitterness developed among some rebels during revolution who convinced US assistance prolonged Batista's regime. (Actually, US stopped arms shipments last March).

B. Fidel's 1955 pledges to nationalize foreign investments and public utilities have not reappeared after Batista's fall.

C. Fidel has called for division of large estates among peasants, but program vague and issued in heat of battle. He is big landowner. Main content of rebel speeches is strong emotional stand for political democracy.

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E. Cuba likely to become an aggressive champion of democracy in hemisphere.

1. Urrutia has already condemned dictatorships in Dominican Republic (where Batista took refuge), Nicaragua, and Paraguay.

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III. New govt faces difficulty in restoring stability.

A. A rift between rebel groups delayed Urrutia's establishment in palace on 5 January.

1. Revolutionary Directorate, a student group which had been fighting in Las Villas province had apparently used its temporary occupation of the palace in an attempt to extract concessions from ~~dominant~~ dominant 26 of July Movement in organization of new govt.

B. Most leaders of 26 of July Movement are politically inexperienced and some, including Fidel's younger brother Raul, appear irresponsible.

C. Difficulties will be added to by old-line politicians such as ex-President Prío.

D. Military appears to have been virtually totally surrendered, but many responsible professional officers are likely to resent control by young rebel leaders and in long run 26 of July Movement may have difficulty controlling military.

E. *attach*

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IV. Communists actively trying to exploit situation.

A. The 8,000-12,000 member Popular Socialist (Communist) Party (PSP), outlawed by Batista in 1953, has strongly supported rebel movement in public statements.

- 1. Its numerous attempts to join rebels in united front were apparently rebuffed.**
- 2. Communists are believed, however, to have infiltrated some rebel units on a low level.**
- 3. Anti-US sentiments of some rebel leaders may be exploited by Commies.**

B. In current fervor for democracy, PSP may be re-legalized.

- 1. However, strong anti-Communist convictions of Urrutia and some other members of new govt apparatus may counter-balance.**

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III. E. Batista's r fuge in the Dominican Republic puts him in a favorable position/^{eventually} to stage a comeback,~~inzing~~ with the aid of dictator Trujillo.

II. Thus far, only a few indications as to new gov't's policies. New regime is a product of a truly popular revolution participated in by lower classes and ~~was~~ may have implications ~~increasing~~ on Cuba's social order.

When you return -



Files of Batista's ineffective Bureau for Repression of Communist Activities,

South tanks and 26 July followers;
at first protected by Col. Parquin against several Communist attempts to seize

Controversial letters
them, have now been taken by rebel leader Cueva ~~referred~~ to the fort
he controls.

Antagonism against British ^{very} strong because of UK ^{selling} ~~supplying~~ tanks and

planes to Batista late last summer (some arrived as late as December). Castro

said at time of arms deal that his movement would boycott all British goods.

A Castro followers have demonstrated in front
of the British embassy ~~with post service~~
taking over Habana.